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Selected Speeches and News Releases

October 11 - October 18, 1990

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

Statement by Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter, October 15.

Today the United States has tabled its agricultural proposal in the Uruguay Round of GATT trade negotiations in Geneva. Our proposal is straightforward, significant, and will contribute to a more market-oriented agriculture. It embodies sound policy and incorporates creative approaches to the global problem of trade-distortion in agricultural trade.

The proposal which is submitted today will propel the discussions forward and promote agreement. It is ambitious, yet prudent; powerful, yet workable; demanding, yet politically feasible. To correct the damage being done to farmers everywhere by trade distortions, the United States seeks the reduction of export subsidies by 90 percent; a decrease of border protection by 75 percent; and, the lessening of distortive internal supports by 75 percent, scheduled to occur over an extended transition period.

Beyond its essential economic role, the new U.S. proposal fully comprehends the vital social role which farming communities play in every nation. Consequently, the American proposal fosters more robust farming communities by promoting opportunities for growth, assures governments the privilege of continuing to support farmers and rural communities so long as they do so in a trade-neutral manner, and provides that reductions in trade barriers take place gradually over a lengthy transition period.

The time left in these vital trade negotiations can now be counted in days. It is time for intense discussions. The industrialized nations need agricultural trade reform to enhance production and marketing efficiencies, and to reduce cost burdens on their consumers and taxpayers. Emerging democracies and developing nations must have reform if they are to become players in the larger world economy.

Obsolete agricultural policies have sabotaged world trade for long enough. These damaging practices can be corrected. Fair agreements can be reached. For the U.S. and the world more trade is better than less trade, reducing trade barriers is preferable to creating them, and every nation wins when its citizens are allowed greater access to the fruits of labor of other nations.

Advances in science and technology will not wait. If we do not reach accord on a more market oriented international system, these advances will bring even larger surpluses and government outlays in the future. Surpluses are already emerging this year.

We are on the doorstep of the new millennium. We can walk through the opening of trade reform together into an economic renaissance, or continue policies better suited to an age without global transportation and instant communication. No government has yet been capable of reversing time. We must walk toward the new century together, without seeking special advantage. We must attempt to ensure greater prosperity for every nation. That is what the Uruguay Round is all about. It is not just a utopian dream; real progress is at hand if we just have the courage to reach for it.

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Statement by Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter, October 16.

Early this morning Congressional conferees secured agreement on a comprehensive farm bill. Agreement was accomplished through the fine work and persistence of Congressman Kika de la Garza, Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Senator Patrick Leahy, Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and their two Republican counterparts, Congressman Ed Madigan and Senator Richard Lugar, along with the excellent input from Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole and other conferees.

No farm bill in memory has been written under circumstances as complex as this one. Not only did the conferees have to visualize the needs of American agriculture over the next five years, but they had to do so in the context of demanding budget realities, increasing global competition, heightened trade disputes, and the necessity for American farmers to expand their role as stewards of our environment.

The new farm bill is about the future, and the future means change. The new farm bill will help American farmers adjust to a rapidly changing world, and hopefully make those changes work to their advantage. Faced with difficult choices brought about by budgetary constraints, the conferees took the preferred course in selecting a "triple base" program over cuts in target prices, thus increasing production flexibility which provides an additional opportunity to earn income.

The dairy provisions are a vast improvement over the versions which initially emerged from the two Houses of Congress. They are much less likely to provide additional government intrusion in the dairy business.

The new bill strengthens the ambitious and constructive environmental goals of the 1985 Farm Bill. It gives increased emphasis to programs involving water quality and tree planting, while also taking steps to improve the fairness of existing programs such as swampbuster and sodbuster.

The initial versions of the legislation strayed from the successful policies that were enacted in the Food Security Act of 1985. But at the end of the Congressional process, the basic precepts of that Act were retained. They will continue to be solid building blocks for the future.

In particular, the 1985 Act enhanced the international competitiveness of American agriculture, and the new bill will fundamentally continue that market-oriented approach through aggressive export assistance programs, increased research efforts, and added production flexibility.

This is enormously important because of the tremendous productivity of American farmers, and their export potential. Each U.S. farmer already produces enough food and fiber for 112 people, but our farmers can do even better in the future. About one of every six jobs in America is generated by agriculture, our largest industry.

It was not easy for the Agriculture Committees to plan for the next half-decade, but they approached their task with diligence. Legislation is the art of compromise. We assuredly do not like everything in this bill and would have written a different bill on our own. But, in the end, it is a respectable work product that balances well innumerable sensitive, often divergent interests.

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USDA OBSERVES NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12—The week of October 14-20 has been designated National School Lunch Week by presidential proclamation to recognize the school lunch program which provides more than 4 billion meals a year to 24 million children in 91,000 schools across the country. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service.

"National School Lunch Week is an occasion to honor the people who

dedicate their skills and talents, time and idealism to provide children nationwide with good nutrition,'' said Catherine Bertini, assistant secretary of agriculture for food and consumer services.

''Hundreds of thousands of food service professionals, school officials, teachers, parents, community leaders, students, federal and state employees, and community volunteers work to ensure that the meals served in the schools provide the nutrition so important to the health and learning abilities of young students,'' Bertini said. ''It's also a good time to think about the farmers who raise the food, and the links between agriculture and the food that appears on our tables every day.''

National School Lunch Week is observed every year, starting on the second Sunday in October. The national school lunch program was established in 1946 by the National School Lunch Act, which declared it ''a measure of national security to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food.''

Since the program's beginning, further legislation has provided for free or reduced-price meals for low-income students. More than 24 million children now eat school lunch every day, and taxpayers contribute more than $3 billion to support the program.

''Along with good nutrition, children in the national school lunch program also begin to learn the good eating habits that will follow them through their lifetime,'' Bertini said. ''The school nutrition programs have worked well over the years to provide the nation's school children with nutritious meals, which ultimately foster the educational process.''

Phil Shanholtzer (703) 756-3286

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CENTENNIAL OF COOPERATIVE WEATHER STATIONS

WASHINGTON—Today marks the beginning of a year-long centennial celebration of the Cooperative Weather Observers in the United States. A ceremony at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, one of the first sites in the country to keep daily weather records, will focus on this outstanding volunteer commitment.

Over the past 100 years, dedicated volunteers have gathered daily weather information for the government's weather service. The data from this citizen network aides in the preparation of the more than two million

meteorological forecasts and warnings provided each year by the National Weather Service.

"The people who produce our nation's food and fiber—many of whom are volunteer observers themselves—are highly dependent on accurate and extensive weather information," said Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter.

Thomas Jefferson envisioned a nationwide network of weather observers as early as 1797. By 1800 there were volunteer stations in six states of our young country.

Beginning as an agency of the Department of Agriculture in 1890, the "Weather Bureau", as it was known, was transferred to the Department of Commerce in 1940.

A key part of the climatological work supporting the forecast effort of the National Weather Service is the Cooperative Weather Observer Corps. This group of weather observers are a mixture of local citizens, corporations, universities, and municipal, state and federal agencies. The nearly 10,000 volunteer stations are located on sites including farms, vacation resorts, prisons, monasteries, churches, zoos, hospitals and radio-tv stations.

"This data supports the Department of Agriculture's programs in monitoring and crop condition assessment and yield estimation work as part of our economic intelligence effort", said USDA Chief Meteorologist Norton Strommen.

At present, volunteer observers donate over a million hours of their time annually to record weather data. Many of the individual observers have made daily measurements for 30, 40, and 50 years and more.

The longest participation by one person was by Edward G. Stoll, who made observations for 76 years in Arapahoe, Nebraska. Successive generations of several families have provided weather records reaching back more than a century.

Today's volunteer weather observers provide data which is widely used in sectors of our economy as diverse as agriculture, commerce, engineering and aviation.

Don Elder (202) 447-4026
Issued: Oct. 12, 1990

#

WEEDS AND YEAST MAY YIELD RUBBER FOR TOMORROW'S TIRES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12—Goldenrod weed and lowly yeast could be genetically engineered in this decade to yield premium natural rubber, lessening America's dependence on imports and petroleum-based synthetics, a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist said today.

Researchers are trying a shortcut to speed their search for genes that could enable high-grade rubber to be provided from goldenrod or other fast-growing plants or by yeast or bacteria in vats, said plant physiologist Katrina Cornish of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

At the ARS Western Regional Research Center, Albany, Calif., Cornish is looking for genes in the tropical rubber tree and in guayule, a slow-growing desert shrub. In these plants, a gene cues cells to make rubber transferase, the enzyme that forms rubber molecules. Other genes make the plants' rubber production start, continue and stop.

To find these genes, Cornish is scrutinizing round, white rubber particles that she separates from the rubber tree's milky "soup" of latex with a time-saving technique called centrifuge flotation.

"It's cleaner, faster and easier than another approach that relies on gel-like filters," she reported today at the First International Conference on New Industrial Crops and Products, held this week in Riverside, Calif.

She wants to insert genes from the rubber tree or guayule into goldenrod or microorganisms. The work may take at least five years, she said.

Rubber tree latex, long the primary source of natural rubber, is and Indonesia. The United States lacks the climate needed to produce Hevea latex.

Why can't the United States simply rely more on synthetic rubber? "Natural rubber is more elastic, more resilient and more resistant to heat buildup than synthetic rubber," Cornish said. "Also, natural rubber is a renewable resource, unlike synthetics made from petroleum."

"Political changes in the producing countries or a crop failure in the rubber tree plantations could cause an emergency shortage of natural rubber here," she added. So, once the transferase gene and other critical genes are identified and inserted, researchers will devise techniques for rapidly rearing the modified plants or microorganisms to get high yields in a hurry. "We want to know how to quickly scale up production in case of a shortage," she explained.

The United States imports some 800,000 tons of natural rubber, worth about $500 million, each year for airplane tires, latex surgical gloves and dozens of other products for commercial or defense use. Automobile tires typically are made of synthetic rubber blended with about 13 to 20 percent natural rubber.

Cornish said biotechnological production of rubber would meet important defense needs but would "not necessarily show a profit—at least not at the outset." That's one reason biotechnology teams from two major U.S. corporations abandoned similar research, she said.

"These biotech teams faced tremendous economic competition from foreign groups that pay laborers about $1.50 a day to tap highly productive rubber trees," she said. "With the high costs for research, development, start-up and labor in the United States, it's unrealistic to expect that we could immediately produce rubber as cheaply as these experienced overseas suppliers."

Inventor Thomas A. Edison and two colleagues—tire magnate Harvey Firestone and automaker Henry Ford—targeted goldenrod as a source of natural rubber around the turn of the century.

Goldenrod rubber was at one time combined with synthetics to make belting and tubes. But it doesn't yield enough latex and the chemical chains in its rubber molecules are short, making the rubber inferior to that from Hevea. With gene engineering, goldenrod's rubber could meet today's standards for durability, Cornish said.

Before joining ARS in 1989, she applied the centrifuge flotation technique to investigate guayule's rubber particles. She now has adapted it for her rubber tree studies. In the technique, rubber tree latex is mixed with an alkaline chemical in a test tube, then spun in the centrifuge at 5,000 rpm for 10 minutes. The rubber particles float to the top like cream in a bottle of milk, she said.

Marcia Wood (415) 559-6070

#

NO MARKETING QUOTA OR ACREAGE ALLOTMENTS FOR 1991-CROP UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Oct. 15—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced that there will be no marketing quota or acreage allotments for 1991-crop upland cotton. The announcement is

required by provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938.

Under provisions of the 1938 Act, a national marketing quota must be announced by Oct. 15 whenever it is determined that the total supply of upland cotton for the marketing year, which begins with the calendar year, will exceed the normal supply. Normal supply is defined as estimated domestic consumption plus estimated exports plus an allowance of an additional 30 percent for carry-over.

The provisions of the act which relate to a marketing quota and acreage allotments for upland cotton were suspended through the 1990-crop by the Food Security Act of 1985. Without new farm legislation, authority for the 1991-crop upland cotton program reverts to the permanent statutory provisions of the 1938 Act.

Based on the latest available data, total supply of upland cotton does not exceed normal supply. Therefore, neither a marketing quota nor acreage allotments are required for the 1991 upland cotton crop.

The farm legislation under consideration in Congress could result again in the suspension of the permanent provisions of the 1938 Act which relate to upland cotton.

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789

#

USDA PHOTOSYNTHESIS RESEARCHER TO RECEIVE VON HUMBOLDT AWARD

WASHINGTON, Oct. 15—Plant physiologist William L. Ogren, who leads a U.S. Department of Agriculture research team working to decipher and improve nature's recipe for photosynthesis, tomorrow will receive the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Award for 1990.

Ogren, a 25-year veteran of USDA's Agricultural Research Service, is research leader of ARS' Photosynthesis Research Unit in Urbana, Ill. He also is an adjunct professor in the Departments of Agronomy and Plant Biology at the University of Illinois.

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, based in Germany and the United States, gives the award annually to a United States scientist for the most significant contribution to American agriculture in the past five years, according to foundation trustee Lore Toepfer of Hamburg, Germany. She will present a parchment certificate, medallion and

$10,000 check to Ogren at a ceremony at the National Press Club here at 11:30 a.m. Oct. 16.

Ultimately, Ogren's research team seeks to change the genes of crop plants to make the recipe for photosynthesis more efficient. In each leaf cell are dozens to hundreds of chloroplasts—bodies that, when bathed in sunlight, act as microscopic kitchens. In a complex series of steps, many still unknown, chloroplasts use dozens of enzymes, including rubisco, to rapidly churn out sugars from raw ingredients of carbon dioxide and water.

"Through their discoveries with rubisco, nature's most abundant enzyme, Dr. Ogren and his research team created an exciting new frontier in the knowledge of photosynthesis," said ARS administrator R. Dean Plowman.

"If they or other scientists are able to genetically engineer crop plants so rubisco can work more rapidly or efficiently, the world's people could benefit from an increased supply of food and fiber," Plowman said.

Rubisco—ribulose bisphosphate carboxylase/oxygenase—was known to supply the soon-to-be sugar, or carbohydrate, molecules with carbon from CO_2. But Ogren's team discovered that, often, rubisco instead attaches pure oxygen—500 times more prevalent than CO_2 in the atmosphere—to the molecules. They also proved that the carbohydrate molecules can get carbon only when rubisco transfers it from CO_2.

The failed sugar-building effort, called photorespiration, wastes energy. "If scientists could prevent this wasted effort," Ogren said, "we might double the amount of carbon dioxide fixed, thus boosting a crop plant's capacity to make its food for growth and development."

Plowman said that, among other achievements, Ogren and his team—

- Found that plant species vary widely in the ratio by which rubisco "prefers" CO_2 to oxygen.
- Devised a means to select mutant plants for lab studies that subsequently established several steps in photorespiration that previously had been matters of wide debate among scientists.
- In studies with a one-celled alga, Chlamydomonas reinhardtii, which has only one chloroplast, they designed a way to multiply the alga while preventing it from replicating its chloroplast genes, including the gene for rubisco; this is helping scientists reveal, and attempt to alter genetically, rubisco's photochemical logic.

- Found a previously unknown plant protein, activase, that triggers rubisco's carbohydrate-creating role.
- Identified, isolated, cloned and sequenced the nuclear gene responsible for activase and learned that the gene has a capability not before seen in plants, that is, it can produce not just one but two different polypeptides, the chemical building blocks of enzymes.

Recently, Ogren's group modified the activase gene sequence and, therefore, the protein's makeup. Some of the engineered proteins enhance the action of rubisco in test tubes. But to see whether this can improve photosynthesis, the researchers now are trying to transfer altered activase genes from spinach to Arabidopsis thaliana, a relative of mustard.

The team's photorespiration and activase studies already have established this plant species as an important new "lab mouse" for many research efforts including USDA's new plant gene mapping project.

Ogren joined ARS in 1965 and has led the Photosynthesis Research Unit since its creation in 1979. A native of Ashland, Wis., he resides in Champaign, Ill. He received his B.S. in chemistry in 1961 from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Ph.D. in biochemistry in 1965 from Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.

Ogren was elected a member of the National Academy of Science in 1986 and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1987. He is a fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America and currently is President of the American Society of Plant Physiologists.

Honors and awards include the Crop Science Research Award of the Crop Science Society of America (1979), ARS Outstanding Scientist (1983), USDA Superior Service Award (1985) and C. F. Kettering Photosynthesis Award of the American Society of Plant Physiologists (1986).

Ogren has authored or coauthored more than 100 scientific publications an is on editorial boards of four journals.

Four other ARS scientists have received the von Humboldt award since it was first given in 1975: T.O. Diener (1975), Karl H. Norris (1978), Howard L. Bachrach (1983) and Glenn W. Burton (1988).

Jim De Quattro (301) 344-4296

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MEMBERS APPOINTED TO WILD HORSE AND BURRO ADVISORY BOARD

WASHINGTON, Oct. 15—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter and Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan today announced appointments to a newly chartered Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board.

The board will advise the interior and agriculture secretaries on issues concerning the management and protection of wild free-roaming horses and burros on the nation's public lands.

"I am exceptionally pleased with the caliber of those nominated to serve on this board," Lujan said. "The board's composition contains the expertise and commitment needed to provide sound advice on issues facing us in managing the nation's wild horses and burro herds."

Yeutter said that the board "is vital to the constructive relationship between the federal government, producers and ranchers on land management issues."

About 46,500 wild horses and burros currently roam public lands managed by USDI's Bureau of Land Management and USDA's Forest Service in Western states.

Board members will serve two-year terms. Each was selected to represent a specific category of interest. Board members are:

— Fred Burke, Wickenburg, Ariz.; former rancher and Arizona state legislator, current owner of a white water rafting company; public-at-large category.

— Dr. J. Wayne Burkhardt, Reno, Nev.; associate professor of rangeland science at the University of Nevada-Reno; rangeland management category.

— Robert Grieve, Savery, Wyo.; cattle and sheep producer and Wyoming state senator; livestock management category.

— Dr. James C. Heird, Eaton, Colo.; associate dean, College of Agricultural Sciences, Colorado State University; wild horse and burro research category.

— Robert K. Hillman, Sacramento, Calif.; director of field services for the Animal Protection Institute of America; animal husbandry and animal welfare category.

— Edward S. Murray, D.V.M., Spur, Texas; president, American Society of Equine Practitioners; animal husbandry and veterinary medicine category.

— Mary Ann C. Simonds, Walnut Creek, Calif.; director, Whole

Horse Institute; wildlife ecologist and horse behaviorist; owner of Equines Ltd., a marketing and consulting business; wildlife management category.

— Karen Ann Sussman, Scottsdale, Ariz.; president, International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros; wild horse and burro management category.

— Lonnie L. Williamson, Washington, D.C.; vice president, Wildlife Management Institute; conservation category.

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#

YEUTTER MAKES APPOINTMENTS TO PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION ADVISORY BOARD

WASHINGTON, Oct. 15—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter has appointed members and officers of the Plant Variety Protection Advisory Board for a term which expires in 1991.

Members appointed to the board are Judith L. Brede, Roll, Ariz.; Linley Brinker, Fresno, Calif.; Dennis E. Brown, Richmond, Va.; Billy E. Caldwell, Raleigh, N.C.; Thomas G. Cherry Jr., Bakersfield, Calif.; J. R. Goodin, Lubbock, Texas; Alan Roy Gould, Midland, Mich.; Frederick S. Humphries, Tallahassee, Fla.; Donald E. Latham, Alexander, Iowa; William Thomas Lovelady, Tornillo, Texas; A. Bruce Maunder, Lubbock, Texas; Ellen B. Peffley, Lubbock, Texas; Rebeca C. Rufty, Raleigh, N.C.; and Sidney B. Williams Jr., Kalamazoo, Mich.

The board was established by the Plant Variety Protection Act of 1970. The act extends legal protection to developers of new varieties of seed-reproduced plants, and allows developers to protect their "inventions" from exploitation by others.

The board's duties include advising the secretary of agriculture concerning the adoption of rules and regulations under the Act and on appeals by plant breeders regarding decisions of the Plant Variety Protection Office. The board also counsels the secretary on opening a protected variety to public use if necessary to ensure the public an adequate supply of food, fiber or feed.

Carolyn Coutts (202) 447-8998

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USDA LAUNCHES WORLD FOOD WEEK

Yeutter Spotlights Those Who Feed The Hungry

WASHINGTON, Oct. 15—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today opened a week of activities celebrating the importance of agriculture and the contributions of those who have dedicated their lives to addressing the problem of world hunger. "Today, at the start of World Food Week, we pause to reflect on the contributions of American agriculture in making the United States, and the world, healthier and more prosperous," he said.

Yeutter recognized John S. Niederhauser, this year's recipient of the World Food Prize for his 40-year involvement in international agriculture and, in particular, his many contributions advancing the production and consumption of potatoes.

Yeutter also conferred the first USDA "Giving So Others May Live" awards to four individuals and one group for their outstanding efforts in feeding the hungry. "We must rededicate ourselves to this noble mission," he said, "and together strive to meet the ultimate measure of human progress: when all the people of the world share in this agricultural bounty, and the blight of hunger and starvation is banished forever."

Awards were presented to U.S. Representative Bill Emerson of Missouri for sponsoring major legislation to help the needy; Maurice Weiss of Los Angeles for establishing a food distribution center for fresh produce; Marsha and Rafael Zambrano of Denver for their extensive volunteer work in the SHARE program which feeds the hungry; and Martha's Table, a soup kitchen serving warm meals in Washington, D.C.

One of the highlights of the week is the 10th annual World Food Day on Oct. 16, originally proclaimed in 1945 to honor the founding of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. Yeutter said, "It is appropriate that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is a World Food Day sponsor because the average American farmer provides enough food to feed 112 people. The United States is also the world's largest food aid donor, contributing an estimated eight million tons of food this year worth more than $1.7 billion."

In an effort to emphasize the contributions of America's farmers and agricultural industry during World Food Week, USDA staffers on Wednesday, Oct. 17, will deliver a loaf of bread and a letter from

Secretary Yeutter to all 535 Members of Congress. The loaves of bread are a traditional symbol of food and prosperity.

Other USDA events scheduled for this week include a visit by Yeutter and several top USDA officials to Van Ness School, an elementary school in Washington, where they will teach a course on the importance of agriculture and serve lunch to the students. These activities also are in coordination with National School Lunch Week.

USDA employees also will participate in "Mission Nutrition," the department-wide food drive, by contributing canned and non-perishable food throughout the week.

The Department of Agriculture will conclude the week on Friday when Deputy Secretary Jack Parnell gives food donated by USDA employees to the Capital Area Community Food Bank.

1990 RECIPIENTS OF USDA's "GIVING SO THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE AWARD"

U.S. Representative Bill Emerson of Missouri is recognized for his leadership in seeking solutions to chronic hunger and malnutrition in the United States and abroad. Emerson has sponsored major legislation, including the Mickey Leland Domestic Hunger Relief Bill, reauthorization of the Food Stamp Program and other bills to improve our nation's response to those who are in need.

Maurice Weiss is recognized for establishing a charitable distribution facility for fresh produce in Los Angeles. The facility has become a model for communities throughout the United States and has given away over 17 million pounds of produce valued at more than $9 million since 1987. Weiss and his wife contribute $37,500 each year to run the program.

Marsha and Rafael Zambrano are recognized for supporting charitable work in Denver, Colo. The Zambranos assist with the distribution of monthly bargain-priced food packages for disadvantaged families. Through Interfaith Task Force, they have assembled and delivered fruit baskets to the elderly.

Martha's Table, a charitable facility in Washington, D.C., is recognized for providing food, clothing and other support to city residents. On a daily basis, 60 to 100 volunteers serve more than 700 meals to the homeless. Volunteers also provide tutoring, homework

assistance, day care and after school care for children, teenagers and young parents.

Kelly M. Shipp (202) 447-4623
Al Maruggi (202) 447-5654

#

USDA TO TRY LOW-FAT BEEF PATTIES IN SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced plans to purchase new low-fat beef patties for use in the National School Lunch Program.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, and Betty Jo Nelsen, administrator of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, are cooperating in purchasing and distributing the patties in an effort to provide a lower fat beef product that tastes good to the nation's school children.

"Meat industry research projects have developed palatable beef patties containing 10 percent less fat," Haley said. "With this USDA trial purchase, we are attempting to move the technology from the laboratory into the packing plant and provide a leaner beef product to the nation's school children. Currently, beef patties served in the school lunch programs average approximately 20 to 22 percent fat. These products are already lower than many commercial products, but the development of a low-fat pattie would be a substantial improvement."

"This announcement could not have been made at a more opportune time since we have just begun to celebrate National School Lunch Week, which emphasizes improving the nutrition of our kids in school," said Nelson.

"We support the development of this new beef product as part of our continuing effort to lower the fat content in the foods we provide to the National School Lunch Program," said Nelsen. "Eventually, as production technology reaches commercial marketing channels, it could also benefit adult consumers concerned with lowering daily fat intake."

USDA will conduct the trial purchase in a two-step sealed bidding procedure. First, USDA will solicit and evaluate proposals and samples from interested suppliers. Second, producers of the product USDA finds acceptable will be invited to submit sealed bids to sell the department up

to 79,200 pounds of their product for distribution to pre-selected schools.

USDA plans to complete its initial purchases by Jan. 15, 1991, and begin delivery of the test sample patties to schools by Feb. 11, 1991. Full details of the trial purchase appear in a solicitation for bids titled "Announcement LS-6." Copies are available from Barbara Cope, Chief, Procurement Branch, Livestock and Seed Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2610-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 447-2650.

Information on the research projects developing palatable lean ground beef are available from Ms. Cope. Samples and proposals responsive to "Announcement LS-6" must be submitted to designated USDA offices by Nov. 15.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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USDA UPDATES ADDRESSES OF RECEIVERS OF BEEF BOARD ASSESSMENTS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is publishing a revised list of addresses of offices authorized to receive assessments for the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board.

Provisions of the Beef Promotion and Research Order, which implement the Beef Promotion and Research Act of 1985, require that cattle buyers collect $1 per head assessments from U.S. producers selling cattle. The buyers remit the assessments to state beef organizations, called Qualified State Beef Councils, which, in turn, remit a portion of them to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board, the national organization functioning under the order.

The board certifies the individual councils to receive the assessments. In states without qualified beef councils, assessments must be remitted to the board directly. The assessments fund programs of the national board and the Qualified State Beef Councils.

Since 1986, when 40 state beef councils were authorized to collect assessments, beef industry councils in Maine, Vermont and Hawaii, as well as the Delaware Beef Advisiory Board, were certified to collect assessments.

The updated list of councils and their addresses will be published in the Oct. 15 Federal Register, along with two addresses of the national board:

P.O. Box 3316, Englewood, Colo. 80155 for general information, and P.O. Box 27-275, Kansas City, Mo. 64180-0001 for remittance of assessments and accompanying reports.

Copies of the announcement are available from Ralph L. Tapp, chief, Marketing Programs Branch, Livestock and Seed Division, AMS, USDA, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, tel. (202) 447-1115.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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USDA RELEASES NORTHEASTERN LOS ANGELES COUNTY FROM MEDFLY QUARANTINE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is releasing a 281-square-mile area in northeastern Los Angeles County, Calif., from a quarantine imposed to contain an outbreak of Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly). The current reduction covers the area east of the San Gabriel River Freeway and north of the Pomona Freeway, including communities stretching from Baldwin Park to Pomona.

Medflies are among the world's most destructive pests of vegetables and fruits, especially citrus.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service established the Medfly quarantine in Los Angeles County on Aug. 23, 1989, and enlarged the quarantined area when fly trapping in other areas indicated that the outbreak had spread. APHIS began reducing the quarantined area two months ago in areas where the Medfly had been eradicated. However, regulations restricting the movement of host fruits and vegetables continue in some Los Angeles communities still under quarantine.

Extensive trapping in the area now being released from quarantine has detected no Medflies for about six months. The last flies were discovered near Glendora on April 16, Pomona on April 18 and Valinda on April 25.

An interim rule, effective Oct. 12, details the area where the Medfly quarantine is being lifted; the rule is being published in the Oct. 17 Federal Register.

Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Dec. 17. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 90-199 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development,

PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Caree Lawrence (301) 436-7280

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CONGRESS RECEIVES SYMBOL OF WORLD FOOD WEEK

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17—U.S. Department of Agriculture employees today delivered a loaf of bread and a letter from Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter to all 535 Members of Congress as part of USDA's effort to emphasize the contributions of America's farmers and agricultural industry during World Food Week, October 15-19.

In the letter, Secretary Yeutter extolled the virtues of American agriculture and spoke of its role in helping to feed America and the world. "Thanks in large part to American agriculture, this world can produce enough food to provide every man, woman, and child with a healthy diet," Yeutter said. The loaves of bread are a traditional symbol of food and prosperity.

"American agriculture is the most efficient and productive in the world. Though just three-tenths of 1 percent of the world's agricultural labor force, U.S. farmers produce 11 percent of the world's food grains, more than one-fourth of the world's feed grains and beef, and almost a third of the world's poultry. The typical American farmer provides for 112 persons. America's agricultural production also helps make possible U.S. aid contributions which this year are expected to exceed eight million tons of food worth more than $1.7 billion," Yeutter said to Congress.

"Let's all pause today and give thanks to American agriculture for helping make America the beautiful, America the bountiful," Yeutter said in closing.

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USDA REPORTS PROGRESS WITH WITCHWEED ERADICATION IN THE CAROLINAS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it has eradicated witchweed from parts of 15 counties in the Carolinas, including three that are now entirely free of this costly parasitic weed. However, additional land on nine farms in eight counties has become infested.

The three counties just freed of the weed are Hoke and Richmond in North Carolina and Marlboro in South Carolina. Still infested are farmlands in parts of 18 other counties. However, the overall number of infested acres has been considerably reduced.

At one time, witchweed occupied nearly 433,000 acres in North and South Carolina. Prior to developments covered in today's announcement, nearly 103,000 acres were infested. Today's change documents the further reduction of the infestation to some 92,000 acres.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service maintains a quarantine on infested acreage, restricting the interstate movement of items, such as seed corn and soil, that could carry witchweed. Along with preventive measures carried out by corn growers and state officials, the quarantine has successfully kept the weed from being spread to other corn-growing areas and has gradually and steadily reduced the infestation in the Carolinas.

Witchweed is a slender, red-blossomed parasitic plant that attaches itself to the roots of corn, sorghum and other grassy crops. It withers or stunts affected plants and reduces or destroys crop yields. It occurs naturally mainly in Africa and Asia and was accidentally introduced into the United States in 1956.

A precise listing of the areas now under quarantine is included in an interim rule published in the Oct. 17 Federal Register and effective on that date.

Comments on the interim rule will be accepted if they are received on or before Dec. 17. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 90-092 should be sent to the Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue,

SW., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

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USDA CLARIFIES HORSE PROTECTION INSPECTION REGULATIONS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has finalized specific regulations that horse show officials must use when inspecting horses for compliance with the Horse Protection Act.

"Show officials responsible for inspecting horses under federal rules are called designated qualified persons, or DQP's for short," said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "They are responsible for seeing that show horses are not made sore by means of cruel methods, devices or chemicals used to alter their gait. The new regulations state the procedures to be used during their inspections.

The regulations state when in the program a horse must be presented for inspection by the DQP, how the horse must be led so that the DQP can inspect its gait and how the DQP should manually examine the forelegs of the horse for signs of soring and pain. The regulations also require DQP's to look at horses as they are being unloaded at the show grounds and as they are exercised and moved in the barn areas.

The new regulations were published as a proposal in the April 28 Federal Register and contain some changes suggested by interested parties during the comment period. The final version of the regulations is scheduled for publication in the Oct. 17 Federal Register and will take effect Nov. 16.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

—long grain whole kernels, 8.28 cents per pound;
—medium grain whole kernels, 7.32 cents per pound;
—short grain whole kernels, 7.27 cents per pound;
—broken kernels, 4.14 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

—long grain, $5.20 per hundredweight;
—medium grain, $4.72 per hundredweight;
—short grain, $4.70 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Oct. 23, at 3 p.m. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

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USDA ANNOUNCES P.L. 480 COUNTRY, COMMODITY ALLOCATIONS FOR FISCAL 1991

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today released tentative fiscal 1991 food assistance allocations of $684.0 million under Titles I and III of Public Law 480 (P.L. 480), the Food for Peace Program.

According to Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder, the allocations are part of $767.0 million in planned commodity assistance for fiscal 1991. Crowder said 31 countries are presently scheduled to receive approximately 3.5 million metric tons (grain equivalents) of food assistance. These allocations are part of Titles I and III program level of $817.0 million, based on the president's budget request, and comply with the current legislative authority.

Crowder said that $83.0 million in unallocated funds has been set aside as a reserve to furnish commodities for unforeseen needs during the fiscal year.

The initial allocations were designed to meet the legal requirements of Section III of P.L. 480, which directs that not less than 75 percent of food aid commodities be allocated to friendly countries that meet the per capita income criterion for lending by the International Development Association. The countries in this category are those with an annual per capita gross national products of $1,035.0 or less, the new IDA eligibility level.

Crowder also said approximately 10 percent of the value of the Title I allocations would be used to finance Title III food-for-development programs. These allocations may also include local currency sales programs under Section 108 of Title I.

Crowder said the program takes into account many variables, including commodity and budget availabilities; changing economic and foreign policy situations, including human rights assessments; potential for market development; fluctuations in commodity prices; availability of handling, storage and distribution facilities; and possible disincentives to local production.

Since situations may develop which could cause a change in country and commodity allocations during the fiscal year, these allocations do not represent final U.S. commitments nor agreements with participating governments.

Title I of P.L. 480 is a concessional sales program designed to promote exports of agricultural commodities from the United States and to foster economic development in recipient countries. The program provides export credit of up to 40 years, with a grace period of up to 10 years and low interest rates.

Title III provides for the forgiveness of the debt incurred under Title I, based on accomplishments in food-for-development programs and projects agreed upon by the United States and recipient countries.

Additional technical information on the P.L. 480 program is available from Mary Chambliss of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, (202) 447-3573.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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AFRICANIZED HONEYBEES FOUND IN RIO GRANDE RIVER VALLEY NEAR HIDALGO, TEXAS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17—Officials with the U.S. Department of Agriculture today confirmed that a swarm of Africanized honeybees (AHB) has been detected and destroyed in the Rio Grande River Valley near Hidalgo, Texas. Africanized honeybees have been moving northward from South America since 1957.

"The Africanized honeybee swarm detected near Hidalgo is the first such swarm found to have crossed the U.S.-Mexico border," said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "We are conducting surveys and intensified trapping to determine whether other AHB swarms are present. APHIS is committed to helping agricultural officials in Texas eliminate initial swarms."

Officials with USDA's Agricultural Research Service found the swarm on Oct. 15 during a regular check of ARS swarm traps in the area. These traps, which have a chemical lure or pheromone to attract and capture migrating swarms, have been in place for a number of years to help ARS researchers gather data on honeybee swarms.

The swarm was destroyed and samples of the honey bees were identified by the ARS laboratory in Weslaco, Texas, and confirmed as Africanized by the ARS Bee Identification Laboratory in Beltsville, Md. The ARS facility in Beltsville is the only one authorized to confirm AHB identifications for USDA.

"Although this is the first time we have trapped a natural introduction of Africanized honeybees in the United States," Glosser said, "we have intercepted and eliminated AHB swarms artificially introduced on ships arriving from South and Central America many times since 1979. The Agricultural Research Service has been instrumental in identifying these swarms."

Glosser said APHIS, the federal agency responsible for protecting U.S. agriculture from foreign pests and diseases, will work with the Texas Apiary Inspection Service based at Texas A&M University to eliminate other initial swarms if they are detected. APHIS and ARS will continue to inspect honeybee traps in south Texas to monitor the spread of the AHB front through Mexico into the United States.

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TOP USDA OFFICIALS TEACH CLASS AND SERVE MEALS AT INNER-CITY D.C. SCHOOL

WASHINGTON, Oct. 18—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter, along with several assistant secretaries and other top officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, today taught classes and served lunches at an inner-city elementary school here in observance of National School Lunch Week, Oct. 15-19.

"National School Lunch Week is an occasion for honoring the many individuals involved in providing American school children with the nutrition essential to their health and education," Yeutter said. "USDA has worked very closely with the Van Ness School over the last several years, so it's fitting that we come here to serve lunch."

As USDA's "partnership school," Van Ness receives tutoring services from some 50 USDA volunteers, as well as funds, materials and educational tours.

The nation's leading agriculture officials today spent several hours at the school teaching the children a short class on the importance of agriculture. The lesson was developed by John S. Niederhauser, the winner of this year's World Food Prize who is being honored for his many contributions in advancing the production and consumption of potatoes.

Following the classroom activities, Yeutter and the other officials greeted the Van Ness lunch room staff and were instructed on how to run a lunch line. The officials then donned aprons and served the students a lunch of barbecued chicken, macaroni and cheese, mixed vegetables, oatmeal roll, fresh fruit and pear cobbler.

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USDA PROPOSES INCREASES IN DAIRY PRODUCT GRADING AND INSPECTION FEES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 18—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed increasing certain fees for its "voluntary" (i.e., industry-solicited) grading and inspection services funded by the dairy industry.

The proposed increase reflects a projected 5-percent inflation in

operating costs, according to Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

The proposed increases are as follows:

—from $38 per hour to $41 per hour for intermittent grading and inspection services, with travel and per diem costs continuing to be charged in addition to the hourly charge; and

—from $34 per hour to $36 per hour for "continuous resident" grading and inspection, i.e., for a grader-inspector assigned to a plant permanently.

Under law, the dairy grading program, like other voluntary commodity grading programs, is user-fee funded and must balance its fee income against its costs, Haley said.

If adopted, the proposals would ensure that the dairy grading and inspection program is financially self-supporting, Haley said.

These changes will be published as a proposed rule in the Oct. 22 Federal Register. Copies may be obtained from the Dairy Grading Section, Dairy Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2750-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Comments, to be received no later than Nov. 21, should be sent to Rm. 2968-S at the same address.

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